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Color Television Slated Soon for Colombia

BOGOTA, Oct. 11 (Orbelat)—Very soon Colombia will have channels for the broadcasting of color television plus an automatic international Telex and a telecommunications network, according to Ramon Martinez Vallejo, general manager of Empresa Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (TELECOM).

Martinez Vallejo, ex-senator from the Conservative Party, added: "What we have achieved this year is comparable to the establishment of the telegraph a century ago. On Nov. 1 we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Colombian communications and we can proudly say that the country is now number one in matters of communications in all of Latin America, above more developed countries like Argentina, Mexico and Brazil."

Numerous Calls

Martinez explained that every day Bogota sends 10,500 calls to other Colombian cities and receives 8,000. He then announced that in 10 months a micro-wave system will begin operations. "With this system Bogota will have 960 channels, which will permit 900 simultaneous calls," he added. "The equipment, costing \$20 million, will be obtained by bidding among 13 international companies, and it will be financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as part of the \$400 million loan authorized by the National Congress."

TELECOM controls 90 per

cent of the international and national telegraphic system, long distance telephones and Telex, and its manager said that to celebrate the communication system's 100th anniversary, an underwater cable would be laid between Cartagena and Miami, and an automatic international Telex service would begin operations.

Underwater Cable

The underwater cable, negotiations for which took four years, will cost \$3.5 million and will speed up telephone communications between Colombia, the U.S. and Europe. For the signing of the contract, 13 technicians from American Telephone and Telegraph will come to Bogota.

On Nov. 1, President Guillermo Leon Valencia will inaugurate the Telex system sending messages to the Chiefs of State of leading world powers and to His Holiness the Pope.

Martinez Vallejo also announced that by 1970, Colombia, as a signer of the International Treaty of Satellite Communications, will be receiving broadcasts from Echo stations.